

Department of Environment and Labour 2001/2002 Business Plan

1.0 Mission

The mission of the Department of Environment and Labour is to protect and promote:

- the safety of people and property;
- a healthy environment;
- employment rights;
- the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members; and
- consumer interests and public confidence in the alcohol and gaming services sectors.

2.0 Goals

Goals for the Department include the following:

1. Promote safe and healthy workplaces/work practices and safe buildings/equipment.
2. Promote sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural areas.
3. Promote employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers.
4. Promote and protect the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members.
5. Promote consumer protection in gaming/amusement activities and the retail service of alcohol.
6. Continuously improve the service we deliver and improve public and staff satisfaction with the work of the department.

3.0 Core Business Functions

The Department's core business functions are described below.

1. **Legislative and regulatory compliance**
Ensure compliance with and enforcement of health, safety, employment, environmental protection, financial services, pension, and alcohol and gaming legislation and regulations.
2. **Environmental and natural areas protection and management**
Protect and manage the environment and natural areas through planning, setting standards and policies, promotion of partnership and stewardship agreements, public education, environmental assessment, and promotion of environmental industries and technology.

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3. **Dispute resolution**

Provide mediation and conciliation services that promote effective workplace relationships, utilizing alternative dispute resolution techniques.

4. **Advice/assistance to injured workers**

Provide advice, assistance and representation to assist injured workers in relation to the Workers' Advisers Program legislative mandate and services.

4.0 Priorities for 2001-02

The following priorities have been identified for 2001-02 to support the achievement of the department's goals and delivery of our core businesses.

Goal 1

Promote safe, healthy workplaces/work practices and safe buildings/equipment

- Develop/revise regulations for:
 - First Aid
 - Temporary Workplace Traffic Control
 - Fire Safety
 - Elevators and Lifts.
- Develop a five year plan to review regulations as required by amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- Review the existing organizational structure for delivery of the OHS program, in accordance with government direction, including the creation of an Accident Prevention Training unit to assist employers and employees.
- Develop a strategic plan to guide future development and delivery of OHS services.

Goal 2

Promote sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural areas

- Complete the development of a sewage management strategy for the province that addresses current deficiencies in sewage management such as untreated sewage discharges, old and aging sewage treatment plants, and malfunctioning on-site systems.
- Release a water strategy which sets objectives for water management, including a focus on

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clean drinking water, water quality protection, and water quantity assessment.

- Work with municipalities to develop cost effective environmental solutions to infrastructure problems resulting in an improved ability to address water/wastewater issues.
- Audit municipal and public drinking water systems and suppliers to verify compliance with the regulations and to ensure that safe drinking water is being provided to consumers.
- Develop and implement sulphur dioxide emission reduction standards. These reductions will be a major step in meeting the commitments of the Canada-wide Acid Rain Strategy for Post 2000 and the New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers Acid Rain Action Plan, both of which are designed to reduce and eventually eliminate acid rain damage.
- Following public consultation, develop updated and improved legislation to protect the province's nature reserves.
- Increase industry involvement in environmental management through the development of agreements relating to the management of paint, fast food and newspapers.
- Design and initiate a process for the development of a "green" plan for the Province in 2003.
- Prepare and release a response to the Report of the Advisory Committee responsible for reviewing the *Environment Act*, and prepare amendments to the *Environment Act*.

Goal 3

Promote employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers.

- Improve the delivery of investigative and advisory services to clients with a view to reducing the response time to employment standards complaints.
- Review the Province's minimum wage rates and recommend appropriate adjustments, if required.
- Maintain existing service response times for conciliation requests as required under the *Trade Union Act*, and continue to offer preventative mediation programs, in support of the heavy collective bargaining agenda in both the public and private sectors anticipated for 2001-02.
- Ensure the provision of competent service to all eligible injured workers through implementation of applicable recommendations of the Auditor General and Review Committee.

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Goal 4**Promote and protect the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members**

- Develop insurance legislation which is harmonized within the Atlantic region, and initiate development of related regulations.
- Respond to proposed amendments to the *Credit Union Act* prepared in accordance with a scheduled review in conjunction with the credit union system.
- Introduce new Life Agent education standards in coordination with the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators and Canadian Insurance Services Regulatory Organization.
- Research and develop policy alternatives and standards and provide representation and negotiation of Nova Scotia's interests in the development of federal/provincial pension benefits standards legislation.
- Prepare regulations in response to omnibus legislation passed in the Fall session of the Legislature which resulted in changes to the *Pension Benefits Act*.
- Draft amendments to the *Pension Benefits Act* and regulations for harmonization of legislation with other jurisdictions, clarify provisions, and address the needs of plan members and sponsors.

Goal 5**Promote consumer protection in gaming/amusement activities and the retail service of alcohol**

- Implement automated business solutions such as integrated computer systems and continue to expand the use of electronic communications and the Internet for communications among licensees, stakeholders and government.
- Review gaming, liquor and amusement activities to ensure they are conducted in accordance with legislation and in the general public good.
- Prepare regulations in response to omnibus legislation passed in the Fall session of the Legislature which resulted in changes to the *Gaming Control Act*, the *Liquor Control Act*, and the *Theatres and Amusements Act*.

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Goal 6

Continuously improve the service we deliver and improve public and staff satisfaction with the work of the department.

- Establish the Department as a "learning organization" through the collaborative development and delivery of in-house training and education sessions.
- Streamline the regulatory process by:
 - Implementing an approval delivery alternatives process in order to streamline the application process for selected low-risk activities that currently require an environmental approval.
 - Continued streamlining of the approval process for the design and installation of on-site sewage disposal systems.
 - Establishing exemption limits and more simplified reporting procedures for low profit charitable organizations, and creating an optional, multi-year licensing system, with respect to liquor, lottery and place of amusement licenses.
- Develop and refine existing risk-based processes to improve the cost effective delivery of inspection services.
- Implement cross-functional delivery of selected inspection services in accordance with assessment of opportunities for improved client service delivery.
- Develop a common platform for delivery of administrative services to departmental agencies, boards, commissions and tribunals based on assessment of opportunities for cost savings.
- Review the Workers' Advisers Program intake process in order to achieve and maintain appropriate response times and assure continued regionalization of this service.

5.0 Budget Context

Budget Allocation by Core Business Function

Core Business Functions	2001-02 Target (\$000's)
Legislative & Regulatory Compliance	16,904.3
Environmental and Natural Areas Management	3,889.0
Dispute Resolution	1,323.7
Advice & Assistance to Injured Workers	1,055.0
Executive Services (support to DM/Minister, legal services, communications, policy, information & business services)	*3,900.0
TOTAL	27,072.0

*This includes \$1.5 million in funding transferred from DTPW for the cost of leased premises, a cost not included in departmental budget prior to 01-02.

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6.0 Outcomes and Outcome Measures

Performance/Outcome Measures

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Target	Strategies to Achieve Target	Notes
Goal: Promote sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural areas.					
Clean water, air and land	Clean water	% of population served by municipal water supplies that receive water meeting the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines for total coliform (coliform and faecal coliform). *Health Canada, NSDEL	99 % by 2004/05	- enforcing new water regulations including the development of municipal water supply protection plans - assisting municipalities with infrastructure upgrades - promoting innovative NS based solutions to environmental problems	Guidelines measure total coliform (coliform and faecal coliform).
	Clean air	number of days air quality index rates good/fair/poor readings *NSDEL	0 days with poor air quality	- testing air quality - promoting education and awareness - introduction of deposition-based industrial approval administrative fee structure	Applies to metro Halifax daily air quality monitoring.
	Acid deposition	Rate of acid deposition on land and waterways	Meeting critical threshold levels by 2010	- introducing and implementing sulfur dioxide emission reductions - supporting the development of national and international agreement relating to air quality	"Critical threshold" levels are levels at which significant damage is not caused.
	Land remediation	Contaminated sites	Identifying and remediating contaminated sites in NS	- developing and implementing a contaminated sites strategy - developing a comprehensive database of information on individual sites - improving processes to ensure sites are remediated	
	Environmental impact of municipal solid waste landfills	municipal solid waste landfills meeting departmental standards	100% compliance by 2005	- work with municipalities - enforcement of regulations	
Natural Areas Protection	Designation of natural areas for protection	Amount of land designated for protection	Increase the amount of land designated for protection	- conducting resource inventories and area assessments - conducting public consultations - encouraging private land stewardship - participating in Crown land planning - supporting partnership agreements	

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Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Target	Strategies to Achieve Target	Notes
Participation in environmental management		Number of designated protected areas benefitting from direct/active management.	Increased level of designated protected areas under active management.	- conducting management planning - continued public education - supporting community partnership development - enforcement	Provides for effective protection while also accommodating wilderness education and nature tourism.
	Community involvement in recycling	percentage of waste diverted from landfills *RRFB, NSDEL	50% diversion in all 7 solid waste regions by 2005	- education - increased access to centralized composting - enforcement	Diversion initiatives include landfill bans, recycling, deposit/ refund, and composting.
	Public awareness of environmental issues	Comprehensive education programs to support departmental strategies and priority initiatives.	# of education sessions presented and # of partnerships formed in the delivery of programs.	- develop and deliver a comprehensive education program on best management practices as they relate to nutrient management, targeting Annapolis and King's Counties. - expand the on-site sewage education program to include the Bras'Dor Lake watershed -expand the drinking water education program, targeting all water suppliers and users - develop and implement a provincial Green Plan - distribute periodic focused reports relating to the state of the environment	The Environmental Education and Training Branch also plays a large role in the public consultation process which accompanies the introduction of new strategies.
	Private sector involvement in environmental management	Number of products/programs under management agreements	develop stewardship agreements for solid waste management related to medical "sharps", paint, and the fast food industry	- legislation - consultation with industry - work with the RRFB	
	Development in the environment sector	total number employed in environmental services and products, academia and ENGOs	increased employment in the environmental sector	- development of a Provincial Action Plan in consultation with industry. -conducting international trade missions -hosting demonstration projects -assisting with access to funding	It is anticipated that a formal target will be developed in conjunction with the Provincial Action Plan.
Goal: Promote safe and healthy workplaces/work practices and safe buildings/equipment					
A safe work environment	Compliance with legislative framework that is reflective of current workplace standards	Number of inspections where an order is not issued.	At or above the five year average	Promotion and education of clients in OHS	
		Average number of registered WCB claims per hundred employees.	At or below the five year average	Work closely with WCB to identify high accident firms, sectors and type of accidents	

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Outcome		Indicator	Measure	Target	Strategies to Achieve Target		Notes
Fire and public safety.			Average number of compensable days for all short term disability claims receiving benefits during the year/100 claimants.	At or below the five year average			
		Number of interventions by staff: (Improved fire and public safety)	The number of repeat offenders who received the program.	Five percent repeat offenders.	Implementation of Juvenile Fire Setters program, with involvement by the Department of Justice, Children's Aid and mental health specialists.		Child fire play and vandalism account for millions of dollars of property loss each year. Fire setting increases in magnitude without an intervention program.
		Level of risk/exposure to injury from elevators and lifts.	Number of incidents reported.	Less than twenty incidents per year.			
<i>Goal: Promote fair wage compensation, employment standards, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers.</i>							
A harmonious and stable labour relations environment		Level of strikes and lockouts.	Percentage of total working time lost due to strikes and lockouts in the economy.	Below the national average.	Effective use of the conciliation and mediation processes.		
<i>Goal: Promote and protect the interests of financial services consumers and pension plan members.</i>							
<i>Goal: Promote consumer protection in gaming/amusement activities and the retail service of alcohol.</i>							
Consumer protection		Compliance of Acts & Regulations by license community.	Number of inspections conducted & infractions reported.	Reduce rate of consumer complaints about licensees. Reduce rate of infractions committed by license community.	Increase focus on type of inspection &/or investigation. Monitor problem areas; work with licensees to increase awareness of regulations and policies.		
<i>Goal: Continuously improve the service we deliver and improve public and staff satisfaction with the work of the department.</i>							
Improved client service		Labour standards complaint assignment times	Length of time for assignment.	Within 60 days of receipt.	Meeting this target is contingent on reducing the current backlog and amending current work flow processes.		
		Resolution levels.	Length of time for proper resolution from time of assignment.	Within 90 days of receipt.			

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<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Strategies to Achieve Target</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	Turnaround time for license issuance and renewal by Alcohol and Gaming	Administrative time to process license application.	Decrease processing time - dependent on license category.	Improved software; Initiate electronic payment of fees.	
	Turnaround time for environmental approvals (to be determined).	Administrative time to process applications	Decrease turnaround time.	Process re-design.	

(* source of data)

March 12, 2001

7.0 Human Resources

Priorities for Human Resources include:

- providing consultative advice and assistance to the Department with regard to its strategic initiatives, restructuring and re-building efforts, organizational design and labour relations issues;
- assisting Managers in their Occupational Health and Safety Audit preparation by leading audit readiness exercises and follow-up in the sections which have not yet been completed.
- coordinating Departmental activities in support of the Bargaining Unit Classification Review;
- coordinating Departmental activities in support of the classification review for Excluded positions.

8.0 Information Technology

During 2000, a records management system, as well as the integrated environmental information management system (EIMAS) was brought on-line in all environment offices. In 2001, the focus will be the integration of technologies used by the two business units, Environment and Labour, and the prioritization, enhancement and development of technology solutions to meet the business needs of the new Department.

Other priorities for 2001 include the following:

- Support and enhance the EIMAS system in accordance with business plans and priorities and support initiatives begun in 2000 to assist with the purchase and implementation of the system in other jurisdictions outside of Nova Scotia.
- Provide assistance to the department's Occupational Health and Safety Division in the selection and implementation of a province wide system to support the department's occupational health and safety inspections procedures.
- Continue to participate in the inter-CSU project to provide regionally-based IT support among departments whose regional offices share a common location.

9.0 Financial Services

This program provides financial services, including payment of accounts, management of revenues and accounts receivable, provision of financial data and analysis and budget/forecast coordination, to the

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Departments of Natural Resources, Agriculture & Fisheries, Environment & Labour, as well as the Petroleum Directorate.

Within the area of financial management the main priorities for 2001-2002 include:

- Implementing and delivery of the Provincial Tangible Capital Assets (TCA) program. This program will modify the manner in which government accounts for tangible capital assets and will provide meaningful costing information.
- Reviewing existing financial policies and procedures to ensure that process improvements are made adding value and reducing bureaucratic "red tape". Ensuring that the Corporate Financial Management System is used in a efficient and effective manner. This will include improving the reporting capability and financial information available to civil servants.
- Providing strategic financial advise to the Departments of Agriculture & Fisheries and Environment & Labour during the formation of these new departments. This will include the development of department budgets and salary analysis/costing.
- Preparing and monitoring estimates and forecasts for resource departments. Ensuring that department fiscal targets are meet by providing sound financial advice and assistance.